

Wycombe Wanderers snub Berks and Bucks F.A.

WYCOMBE Wanderers snubbed the Berks and Bucks F.A. at Chesham yesterday (Monday), when they refused to collect the County Senior Cup and their winners medals, after beating Thatcham 4-0 in the final after extra time.

Wycombe lined up to applaud Thatcham from the field and then walked off the pitch and went straight into the dressing room. The Berks and Bucks officials, waiting with the trophy and medals, were obviously flummoxed by the whole situation. After a few minutes Thatcham came up to collect their losers medals, but Wycombe stayed put in the changing room. Outside, a large crowd of Wycombe fans began chanting: "We want to play in the London Senior Cup." If the Berks and Bucks did not realise what was going on before, they did now. This was Wycombe Wanderers' protest against the county's refusal to allow them entering into the London Senior Cup.

Blues manager Brian Lee explained in the changing rooms: "This is our protest against the Berks and Bucks F.A. For too long it has been one way traffic — we do everything for them and they do nothing for us."

Brian Lee was referring to Wycombe's achievements in the past, particularly in the F.A. Cup. He added: "We didn't want to spoil Thatcham's day, so this was a mild protest, but we feel we have been badly treated."

Wanderers have applied to the Berks and Bucks for permission to enter the London Senior Cup for the last three years. Each time they have been refused and this year — only two weeks ago — they were given no reason for the refusal.

Asked what action the Berks and Bucks F.A. would take over Wycombe's protest, secretary Charles Twelftree would not comment.

Wycombe's refusal to collect the trophy they had won minutes earlier is bound to cause trouble. The club will now have to wait and see what action the county F.A. will take. Mr. Twelftree said the association would be meeting in the near future to consider the events at Chesham. "Wanderers' actions are completely understandable but they will probably have to pay for their protest."

The events after the match were not the only shocks in a highly controversial Senior Cup final. With the match only 11 minutes old, Blues centre back Keith Mead was sent off by referee Ken Walker of Slough for swearing. The incident occurred after Terry Reardon had been pulled up by the referee for the same offence. Mead made a comment to Reardon (not the referee) and then appeared to be booked. Mead had returned to his position when Mr. Walker pointed to the pavilion and ordered him from the field.

Keith Mead said afterwards that he had made the comment to Reardon and did not realise, at first, that he had been sent off. Neither Reardon nor Mead were booked for the offence of swearing and yet Mead was sent off without being cautioned.

Mr. Walker was not available for comment after the game.

It seems almost certain Wycombe will appeal against the dismissal. Mead, the first Wanderers player to be sent off since Keith Searle in a Berks and Bucks Senior Cup match at Maidenhead several years ago, faces a three match suspension at what could be a crucial time for the club.

Mead's dismissal and Wycombe's refusal to accept the trophy, overshadowed an extremely brave performance by Thatcham. The Hellenic

League side, beaten only twice this season, battled hard throughout the 90 minutes and only lack of fitness let them down in the end. Obviously, with Wycombe down to 10 for the majority of the game, Thatcham's task was made easier but their defence deserves full praise for their display.

Thatcham had a great chance to get the early goal they wanted in only the fourth minute when the blond haired Martin Hunt weaved his way through into the box and put inside, but when faced only by goalkeeper John Maskell, he drove fractionally wide. It wasn't long afterwards that Mead was sent off and Wanderers took a long time to get used to playing one short. Reardon dropped into the back four leaving the Blues with two men in midfield.

After Mead's dismissal it seemed every decision by the referee went against Wycombe and the situation was made even worse when he disallowed what looked like a perfectly good goal by Keith Searle. The centre-forward broke through and despite being fouled by a

defender, drove the ball home. Mr. Walker halted play and awarded Wycombe a free kick for the original offence.

Thatcham 'keeper Charlie Palmer saved well from Tony Horseman and then Mick Saville cleared Alan Phillips' header off the line before the referee again denied Wycombe a goal. This time Steve Perrin

half well with Searle shooting just wide but play soon reverted back to the slow tempo and with Thatcham racing out of defence whenever trouble threatened, the Blues were often trapped off side.

Hunt continued to look Thatcham's most dangerous player and it took a great tackle by Phillips to rob him in the 59th

game wide of the mark in the sixth minute and then two minutes later Horseman cracked home the first of a hat-trick. A fine 1-2 by Perrin and Reardon sent the latter surging through the Thatcham back four. Terry's shot was blocked but Horseman pounced on the rebound. A few minutes later Hunt lost the ball in midfield and a deflection sent the ball straight into the path of Searle who placed the ball perfectly into the corner.

In the 11th minute Horseman made it three after Perrin's full blooded volley had struck Palmer and two minutes later Thatcham were beaten again when Holfield slung over a cross from the left and Horseman rifled the ball home gloriously on the volley. Thatcham by now almost exhausted, held out until the final whistle before going off to deserved applause from the crowd and their opponents.

minute. Phillips, in fact, had a fine game in the heart of defence while Howard Kennedy worked harder than anyone in midfield.

There were few chances for either side in this second half. Wycombe won the bulk of possession but tended to waste it with short passing which proved ineffective on the slow surface.

Wanderers must have wondered just what they had to do to score after that and for the rest of the half their football deteriorated. On the tacky Chesham pitch, the ball was difficult to move around quickly and the play seemed to be at half pace. Passes went astray too often and by half time there were no goals... but there had been plenty of incident!

Wanderers began the second

By STUART EARP Wycombe 4, Thatcham 0 (a.s.t.)

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell, D. Alexander, K. Mead, A. Phillips, G. Hand, H. Kennedy, T. Reardon, M. Holfield, A. Horseman, K. Searle, S. Perrin, Sub. G. Mackenzie (not used).

THATCHAM: C. Palmer, S. Foster, R. Snow, C. Fenny, M. Saville, D. Robertson, A. Matthews, M. Simmonds (Sub. D. Patey 45 mins.), A. Brereton, W. Maule, M. Hunt.

Referee: C. K. Walker (Slough).
Half time: 0-0. Goalscorers, Wycombe — Horseman 3 (9th, 11th, 14th), Searle (10th).